



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## Exploration and Discovery.

---

Dr. E. J. BANKS, Field Director of the Expedition (Babylonian Section) of the Oriental Exploration Fund of the University of Chicago, has made the following reports from Bismya:

### REPORT NO. 19.

"BISMYA, May 6, 1904.

"In the list of finds inclosed are two objects of special interest, which were found during the five days' work of the past week. One is a fragment of a large inscribed marble vase resembling the type found at Nippur, and although the writing is nearly defaced, I am inclosing a copy of all that I can see. The other object is a large fragment of a very large plano-convex brick-shaped tablet, inscribed on both sides in the most archaic characters. The fragment, which is nearly the quarter of the brick, contains 70 lines of writing; the original must have contained nearly 300. I have been trying to prepare a copy of the inscription to inclose this week, but the pressure of work may not permit me to do so. It is by far the most valuable inscription yet discovered at Bismya, and possibly the most valuable of all the very ancient inscriptions. . . .

" . . . I am now digging off the top of the hill (IV), that we may safely go deeper into it. Thursday one of our men was buried by a landslide and when dug out was unconscious, but he is not seriously injured.

"There seems to be very little wall at IV, and the two large rooms appearing on the west side of the hill confirm my impression obtained from an evident order in the arrangement and character of the tablets, that a school existed here.

"Last Wednesday we were surprised by the appearance of four visitors, Rev. Mr. Ussher of Philadelphia and Miss Brinton. The others are missionaries from Bagdad. Mr. Ussher, who has just visited the excavations at Nineveh, Kalah Shergat, and Babylon, when seeing the results here, became enthusiastic over Bismya. The visitors, the first we have had, will shortly leave *via* Nippur, and Mrs. Banks will go with them, to stop in the cooler climate of Bagdad."

---

### REPORT NO. 20.

"BISMYA, May 13, 1904.

"Our visitors left Wednesday, May 11, and with them Mrs. Banks, who will remain in Bagdad during the Summer. Last Monday, together with

Mr. Ussher and Dr. Bridgestock, I visited Fara, and I beg to inclose a paper on my impressions of the work of the Germans at that point. . . .

"In the lower part of the room were a number of round tablets, a copy of one of which I am inclosing, and which I take to be a copying exercise.

"We are now working on a trench connecting I and IV to discover what buildings, if any, occupied the intervening space. We are clearing out a plano-convex well at IV, in which we are now at the depth of 12 meters, and are finding an extraordinary amount of entire and broken pottery; other gangs are clearing out the remaining rooms of IV, but are finding nothing.

"The heat, although it is but the middle of May, is becoming intense, and the men even when urged by the sheikhs to remain, are beginning to leave. The thermometer has registered 120° in the early morning at the excavations. This extreme temperature is due to the hot sand. Outside the sand belt, and in the cultivated tracts, as at Affedj, the weather is comparatively cool. It will be but a matter of days when most of the workmen will leave, and those who are forced to remain will be able to work but two or three hours in the early morning and in the evening. However, I shall continue the work as long as it is possible to do so. I am preparing to spend the summer in preparing a final report on the temple, and in copying tablets, unless I am instructed to do otherwise.

"In the absence of a map I am inclosing this rough design that you may be able to understand the relative positions of the various hills in which excavations have been made. The square roughly represents the high ground. The highest hills are on the southwest side and there the chief work must be done, while every part of the square must be worked over."

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE EXCAVATIONS BY THE GERMANS AT FARA AND  
ABU HATAB.

"The ruins of Fara and Abu Hatab are situated four hours by horse south of Bismya, and about an hour distant from each other. Here the Germans, under Koldewey, have carried on excavations for nine months, with a force varying from 300 to 500 men.

"Fara, the larger of the two ruins, is somewhat smaller than Bismya, a little more than half a mile in its greatest diameter and about twenty feet above plain level at its highest point. Its shape is somewhat suggestive of a crescent; its soil is permeated with salt and is black and soft. The bed of an ancient canal appears on the southeast side of the ruins, and some distance away on the other side are a few low ridges representing the ancient burial place.

"The excavations at Fara began at the northwest corner, and consist

of a series of parallel trenches about eight feet wide and four deep, running entirely across the ruin and out into the desert at the sides. At the appearance of a wall the course of the trench was changed until the building of which the wall was a part was cleared. One small palace not far from the northwest corner came to light, and near the center of the ruins a much

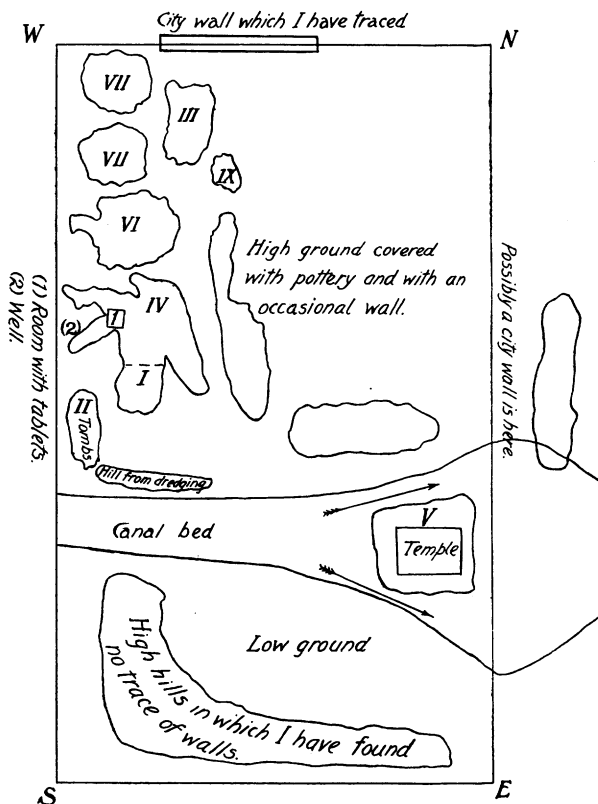


FIG. 11.—A Rough Sketch of the Mound at Bismya.

larger palace, near which is an enormous well. The well which I had no time to measure may be twenty feet in diameter and forty feet deep, and is built up entirely of plano-convex bricks laid in every conceivable position. Running down one edge is an ordinary Babylonian drain built up with terra-cotta rings. Nearly half of the bricks of the wall have been removed to furnish material for the large house constructed for the use of the excavators.

"If the reports of the workmen formerly employed at Fara may be trusted, it was three months after the excavations were opened before a

single object of value was discovered; and all of the antiquities carried away, with the exception of a bronze head of a deer, which it is said was found in a palace near the center, came from the southeast side. In this palace, at



FIG. 12.—The Northeast Palace at Fara.

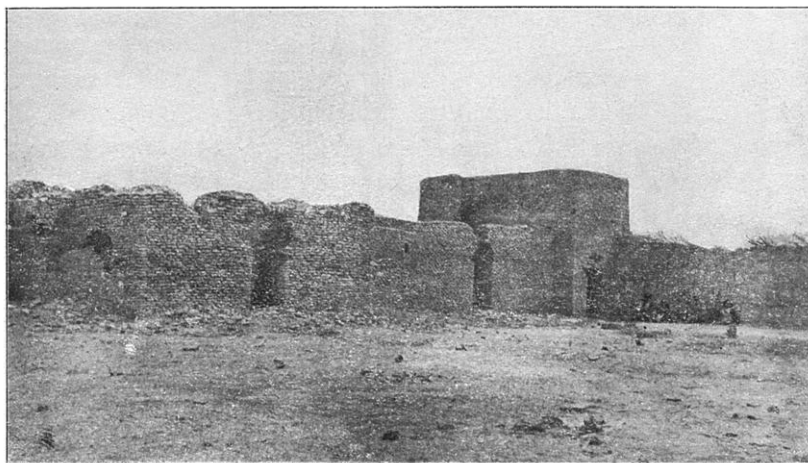


FIG. 13.—Within the Court of Koldewey's House at Fara.

the very end of the ruin, were found a number of stone vases, some of them entire and some with brief inscriptions, and in the dump of dirt near by I picked up a small, perfect, white-marble vase which had escaped the atten-

tion of the workmen. In the same palace were found some good baked-clay tablets, 250 in number, so the former workmen say. In every part of the ruins immense numbers of terra-cotta vases appeared.

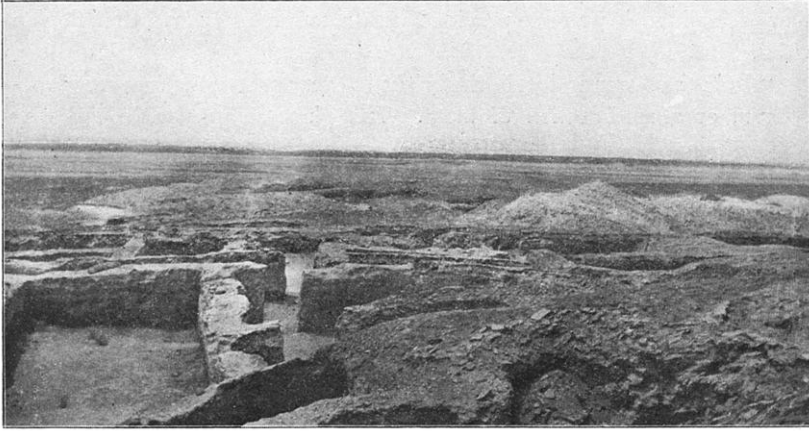


FIG. 14.—The Palace at Fara in Which the Finds Were Made.



FIG. 15.—The Arched Sewer at Fara, Built of Plano-Convex Brick.

“By far the most interesting object at Fara is the sewer which emptied into the canal. Its walls are a meter apart and a meter high, and upon them rests a perfect arch of plano-convex bricks, perhaps the oldest arch

known and probably older than the one found beneath the temple at Nippur. In the cemetery beyond the canal a wall twenty feet or so in width was uncovered, and along its side and a meter below the surface a few round terra-cotta coffins were unearthed. Fara seems to have possessed no temple, or if so it was not provided with a tower, as in later Babylonian cities.

“As in the sewer and well, the bricks in every part of the ruin are plano-convex, or a modification of them. The plano-convex bricks are very

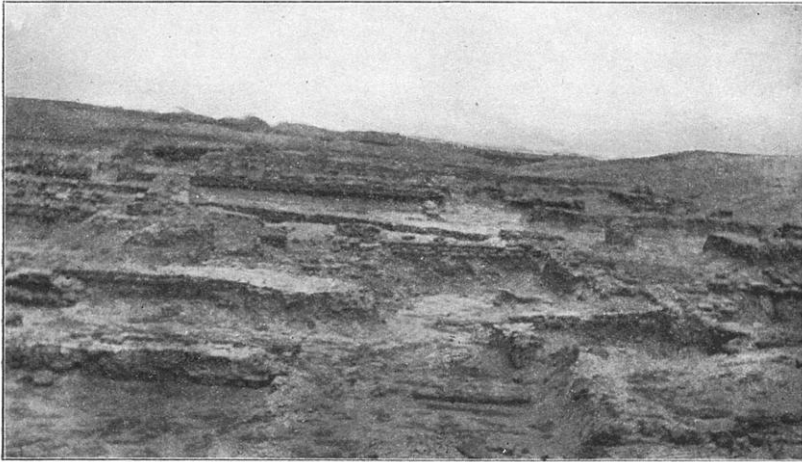


FIG. 16.—The Central Palace near the Great Wall.

small and the others nearly double their size, measure  $29 \times 15 \times 5$  cm., and are less convex. Some are marked with a single groove; others with three small circular holes as if punched by the end of a walking-stick.

“Comparing the bricks with others found at Bismya, it is easy to assign an approximate date to the city which the ruins of Fara represent. At Bismya, below the great square bricks of Sargon, 3800 B. C., are found long thin bricks marked with four grooves and still deeper bricks with three and two grooves in various positions. Still deeper are the plano-convex bricks. At Fara, nothing of a later date than plano-convex bricks appears upon the surface, the city being one of the most ancient of Babylonia, the last king who built there having ruled generations before 3800 B. C. There is reason to believe that Fara ceased to exist as early as 4000 B. C. The shape and material of the marble vases, fragments of which are scattered on the surface, are identical with those found in the

stratum of plano-convex bricks at Bismya, and again certify to the extreme antiquity of the ruin. That the Germans found few tablets is not surprising, for the city did not exist during that period when most of the tablets from Nippur and Abu Habba were written.

"What city the ruins of Fara represent is uncertain. I doubt if the Germans know its ancient name. It is certain that it is not Isin, the name of the place which they hoped to discover.

"Great credit is due Koldewey for his patient, systematic work. His

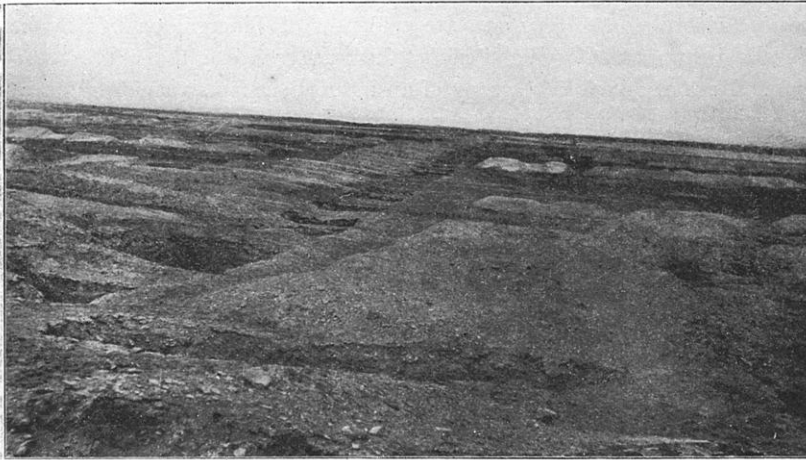


FIG. 17.—Koldewey's System of Trenching at Fara.

trenching, a system peculiar to himself, gives the impression of thoroughness, and the way he finishes the work, as he goes from one end of the ruin to the other, increases the impression. However, in Arabia, where troubles with the Arabs are likely to terminate the excavations at any moment, it would seem advisable to excavate the most promising points first. At Fara nothing was found for three months, but the work went steadily from one end of the ruin to the other, and only at the further end were objects of any value discovered. When less than a month was required to practically finish the work one of his men was killed in an Arab battle, and the Government closed the excavations. It would seem that the richest treasures of the ruin may lie under the little corner of the mound still untouched and there they must remain.

"At Abu Hatab, a small, low, and rather insignificant ruin of a later date, the same system of trenching was employed. The results, it is said, were few."



## REPORT NO. 21.

"BISMYA, May 20, 1904.

"I am pleased to report that among the finds of the past week are a number of objects of very great interest. The first, perhaps one of the most valuable things yet discovered at Bismya, is about a quarter of a large plano-convex brick-shaped tablet, inscribed with about 80 lines of the most archaic form of characters. The fragment does not belong to a similar one which was found a few days ago. You will notice that in the copy of the inscription which I am inclosing occur the forms of the signs *x* and *y*, which, according to Hilprecht, are evidences of different periods in the development of cuneiform, and cannot therefore appear in the same inscription. I am also inclosing a copy of an inscription upon a small fragment of a stone tablet, and of another upon half of an onxy-like marble vase. All of these objects were found at IV. Two more brick stamps of Naram-Sin have been discovered, but both are very fragmentary. They bear the same inscription which is upon the one previously discovered, and are like it in every way, excepting that their backs are provided with knobs instead of a semicircular handle. A third bronze tablet has been discovered. It is badly corroded, but I take its inscription to be identical with that on the other two. Although I bought it of a Montifik woman, I believe that it was stolen by one of the workmen from the temple.

"I am also pleased to report that I have discovered the fragments of four bricks, bearing upon the edge a fourteen-line inscription of Kurigalzu, whom I regard as one of the latest builders at Bismya. The writing is very indistinct, but I hope to be able to send a copy of it later. I have also another brick inscription, a copy of which I am trying to prepare to inclose.

"I am inclined to believe that IV may contain the ruins of an Istar temple. My reasons are that in the large tablet-room of this structure were found the brick stamps speaking of Naram-Sin as the builder of the house of Istar, if I read the inscription rightly; in the ruins we found three small, obscene bas-reliefs, things which one could easily associate with the rites of the Istar worship; inscribed vase fragments which would be more likely to be found in a temple than in a house, and finally the general plan of as much of the building as is now uncovered. No traces of a Ziggurat have yet appeared. All of the finds in IV were found on the level of the floor of this structure, and we are now working to clear the entire hill to that level, moving from three to four meters of dirt. The most modest of the bas-reliefs to which I have just referred represents a nude figure seated or squatted upon a decorated stool. The modeling is very fine and reminds

one of the best Greek or Roman art, but it was found together with objects of the greatest antiquity.

"Cut through the floor of this building are three oval-shaped holes which I cannot yet understand. One of them, but half a meter in its greatest diameter, is six meters deep and is enlarged at the bottom, so that the entire hole resembles a huge boot. The walls are of libbin; consequently, the hole could not have been connected with any water works. Along their sides small niches were cut to assist in climbing in and out, and the entire walls show marks of ancient picks. The holes do not seem to have been graves, or places for cold storage, or drains, or shafts sunk by illicit antiquity diggers as the workmen assert. Nothing but pure dirt was found in them. If a temple stood here they might have been used in connection with its service. A plano-convex brick well in the vicinity has been cleared out. It is cistern-shaped, 67 cm. in diameter at its top, and 130 below. At the bottom twelve meters below the surface were found at least 100 plates, broken and whole, 2 large vases, 10 smaller vases, one perfect marble vase, fragments of another, a marble slab and two lapis-lazuli beads of a shape found in the tombs. We are now clearing out a square brick well a few meters away.

"While digging a trench along the ridge of one of the side hills of IV which I designate as *IVa*, we have come upon two houses, and in one of them were found a number of tablets. I am finding upon the tablets from this and other parts of Bismya the name of the city UD.NUN.KI, but in nothing that I have here can I find the pronunciation of this combination. That it is the name of the city there is no doubt.

"The difficulties in our way have become quite serious during the past few days. A battle between the Montifik and the El-Bedin occurred near here this past week, and three of the El-Bedin were killed and their flocks stolen. The occasion is that Hamud Pasha, the chief of this branch of the Montifik, is grazing his camels and has pitched his tent in El-Bedin territory. The result of the battle is that a blood feud exists, and our workmen, afraid to remain in the vicinity, have been demanding their money that they may leave. One of the sheikhs came to take his men away, but as I explained that they were safer with me than with him, they remained. However, about forty men, driven by fear, the increasing heat, and the sand storms, which seem to grow more terrific and numerous with the heat, have gone.

"To add to the difficulties, Ahmud, my right hand man at the excavations, the only one whom I can trust to any extent, suffered a rupture in some unaccountable way, and is now laid up. The Montifik will probably

move in a few days, and as they have not yet attacked us, as everyone has expected and as it was reported that they would do, they may leave us in peace. Although I shall continue to work as long as possible, I do not think I can keep the men for more than another ten days, and our only course is then to go to Bagdad to pass the summer, or to await further instructions."

---

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER FROM REV. MR. USSHER.

"BAGDAD, May 20, 1904.

"... For the past two months and more, I have been visiting the various points in Turkey-in-Asia at which excavations are being carried on in the interests of science, wholly for personal pleasure. Yesterday, I returned from a week's visit to Bismya, where I received a cordial welcome from Dr. E. J. Banks, of whose magnificent work under the most trying circumstances, surely you and your University may justly feel proud. . . .

"... During the past four months, I have visited all the fields of work in operation except Tel Lo. This includes Nineveh, Nimroud, Kaleh Shergat, Toprak Kalah, Babylon, Babel, Nippur, Tel Ibrahim, Fara, Abu Hatab, and Bismya, a journey which none of the explorers in this field have taken. May I not feel somewhat qualified therefore to speak thus? I can assure you after having seen them all, studied their methods, made the personal acquaintance of those in charge, and feeling fairly well informed as to the results, that Bismya will add a crowning glory to them all, not even surpassed by Nippur, of which the University of Pennsylvania is so proud, and justly so. Bismya, after four months of the most economical management, under the trials and deprivations which *none* of the other excavators have experienced because they are all differently situated (save perhaps Fara where the Germans were obliged to cease working), has yielded a sufficient return to reimburse the University of Chicago manifold, and open up new fields of research in the language, religion and arts of pre-Sargonic history hitherto unknown. Bismya seems to have been a ruin before Nippur began to be great, such is its antiquity."

ROBERT FRANCIS HARPER, *Director*.

HASKELL ORIENTAL MUSEUM,  
July 20, 1904.

---

EXCAVATIONS MADE BY THE FRENCH IN SUSA AND  
BABYLONIA, 1902-1903.

In the excavations made in Susa during the winter of 1902-1903 by M. de Morgan and his companions, the ancient city did not disappoint those whom in preceding years it had attracted with its largess of archæological